

Roger Clap Community Academy

Prospectus

January 14, 2011

Roger Clap Innovation School

Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	1
Innovation Information Sheet.....	2
Innovation School Prospectus Certification Statement.....	3
I.	
A. Mission Statement	4
B. Vision Statement.....	4,5
C. Statement of Need.....	5,6
D. Primary Proposed Partnership.....	6
II.	
A. Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.....	7,8
B. Schedule and Calendar.....	8
C. Staffing.....	8,9
D. Professional development.....	9
E. Policies and Procedures.....	9,10
F. Budget.....	10
III.	
Capacity of Applicant Group.....	10, 11, 12
IV.	
Timetable for Development and Establishment.....	12

ROGER CLAP COMMUNITY ACADEMY INNOVATION SCHOOL INFORMATION SHEET

This sheet must be included in all prospectus submissions.

Proposed Innovation School Name:	Roger Clap Community Academy
Full/Partial Conversion or New:	New
Proposed School Address (if known):	35 Harvest Street Dorchester, Ma 02125
Primary Contact Name:	Kenneth P. Jervis
Primary Contact Phone Number(s) :	617.269.2640
Primary Contact Fax Number(s) :	617.635.6389
Primary Contact Email Address:	ejeanlouis@boston.k12.ma.us

Existing School Name:	Roger Clap Elementary
Existing School Address:	

Proposed Innovation School opening school year: **x 2010-11**

Proposed duration of innovation plan (up to five years): **x 5 years**

School Year	Grade Levels	Total Student Enrollment	Total number of Staff
First Year	K1 to grade 5	135	12
Second Year	K1 to grade 5	140	12
Third Year	K1 to grade 5	145	12
Fourth Year	K1 to grade 5	150	12
Fifth Year	K1 to grade 5	160	12
...			
At Full Enrollment	K1 to grade 5	163	12

Will this school serve students from multiple districts? **x No**

INNOVATION SCHOOL PROSPECTUS CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Proposed Innovation School Name:	Roger Clap Community Academy
Proposed City/Town Location:	Dorchester (Boston), MA

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this prospectus is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Authorized Person _____ **Date**
Jan.14, 2011

Elie Jean-Louis

Authorized Person Information	
Print/Type Name:	Elie Jean-Louis
Address:	c/o Martin Luther King K-8 School 77 Lawrence Avenue, Dorchester, MA 02121
Phone Number:	617.635.6730
Fax Number:	617.635.9838
Email Address:	ejeanlouis@boston.k12.ma.us

Part I.

A. Mission Statement

Located on the Dorchester/South Boston Line, the Roger Clap Community Academy will serve a diverse population of approximately 150 students in grades KI through 5. This school will be designed with the understanding that parents, community stakeholders and educators will work together to create an educational infrastructure that reflects, celebrates, and supports the values of the community that it serves. This institution will be committed to overcome the disparities between school and home culture by integrating the family and the community in the decision-making process. The Roger Clap Community Academy will be an extension of its community.

The school's mission is: **To ensure that every student regardless of socio-economic background, race and ethnicity has access to a rigorous and comprehensive education in a global economy.** Because the school is grounded in the historical significance of its neighborhood; **Students will eventually become responsible and caring members of their community.**

B. Vision Statement

The Roger Clap Community Academy believes that a “first class” education is paramount to the future of students and their community. Therefore, its vision is one that educates the whole child, academically, socially and emotionally. It is an eclectic education that exposes students to various academic skills and knowledge, including the arts and sciences. It is also an education that is transformative by ensuring that students have a positive attitude towards learning. The school will move its students beyond the stage where they only learn with proper stimulation by teachers. A positive attitude towards learning will become a value, an integral part of the students' personality.

- The Roger Clap Community Academy Innovation School will foster a culture of life long learning by offering academic experiences that are relevant and meaningful to students' lives.
- The Roger Clap Community Academy will provide an environment that is safe and friendly, nurturing and socially inclusive.
- The Roger Clap Community Academy will provide instruction that is tailored to meet students' academic needs.
- The Roger Clap Community Academy will ensure that instructional interventions take place at all grade levels to bridge the achievement gap.
- The Roger Clap Community Academy will ensure that there is enough enrichment support for those students who are academically gifted and talented.

- The Roger Clap Community Academy will ensure that every student meets his/her full potential by developing the whole child.

C. Statement of Need

For more than a decade, the Boston Public Schools have invested resources in curriculum adoption, the training of teachers, coaching to build capacity and new assessments to measure academic progress and inform instruction. Some progress has been made as indicated by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessments multi-year data. However, in many school communities, less than 40% are proficient in both literacy and mathematics. The academic reality is somber in certain sections where there is a sizable population of students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Our community is losing faith in the Boston Public Schools' ability to improve our schools and would like to see the district experiment with a new educational model that offers more flexibility, more autonomy, and parents and community stakeholders to be included in the decision-making process.

Our traditional schools continue to face hardship because there are too many factors that are beyond the reach of their administrators: lack of control in staffing, lack of flexibility in budgetary decision, curriculum and assessments choices. Creating a culture of rigorous academic performance is often compromised by stringent contractual regulations. An Innovation School with a strong parental and community involvement will bring some additional resources both in human capital and funding. Because of more flexibility in budgetary decision, resources will be allocated more wisely and adjustments could be made as needed, such as allowing the school to extend the school day for some students. With curricular autonomy, the school can use other materials to support the core academic standards and utilize a wide variety of formative assessments to evaluate learning. With staffing autonomy, an Innovation School leader can be more creative in terms of teacher assignment, specialization in some grade levels, and programming.

The Dorchester/South Boston community has been meeting regularly with Boston Public School administrators to seek advice and work on the school's prospectus. The Roger Clap Community Academy will be located at 35 Harvest Street in Dorchester, Ma 02125. It will serve a population of approximately 150 students that will reflect the ethnic composition of the neighborhood:

34% White, 32% African American, 23% Hispanic, 8% Asian, 3% other
 28% will be English language Learners (Approximately)
 75% will receive free and reduced lunch (Approximately)

The Roger Clap Community Academy has the solid building blocks of a neighborhood school. But like any urban school, there are many challenges to be met. This is a great opportunity to use the autonomy allowed by the Innovation model to create an

environment that promotes the education and well-being of the whole child. This model will allow increased time for academic instruction, hands-on learning in the local community, opportunities to investigate the arts and sciences and healthy lifestyle through nutritional and physical education opportunities. This model will promote student achievement and proficiency and align the Roger Clap Community Academy with the Boston Public Schools Acceleration Agenda.

D. Primary Proposed Partnership

In addition to our partnership with all families, external partnerships will be a key component in the Roger Clap Community Academy's strategy to provide a comprehensive education to its students. These organizations will help the school meet its academic, programmatic, social/cultural and financial goals as needed. Certain partners are already identified and others will join in the future:

Dorchester Historical Society, 195 Boston Street, Dorchester, Ma. 02125

www.dorchesterhistoricalsociety.org

University of Massachusetts, Boston, School of Education, Professor Pat Paugh

University of Massachusetts, Boston, Extension School-Nutrition program

Urban Learning Farm, Burrell Street, Boston, in conjunction with the Food Project, 10

Lewis Street, Lincoln, Ma. 01773 <http://thefoodproject.org>

Boston Arts Program-After School Visual and Performance Arts Program

Fit Kidz, www.Fitkidz.biz- Before School Fitness Program

Family Services of Greater Boston, www.fsgb.org

John W. McCormick Civic Association, 72 Roseclaire Street, Dorchester, Ma. 02125

www.mccormackcivic.com

Andrew Square Civic Association, www.andrewsquarecivicassociation.org

Columbia Savin Hill Civic association, 36 Saxon Street, Dorchester, Ma. 02125

www.columbiasavinhillcivic.org

The University of Massachusetts' Department of Education, through its Student Teaching program will provide needed instructional support as teachers differentiate instruction in the classrooms. They will also be a key partner in advising the board on educational issues and provide much needed professional development for the Clap Innovation School staff. The Urban Learning Farm will provide a great avenue for students to explore the world around them and learn about nutrition. The Boston Arts Program will play a significant role in the design and implementation of the art classes offered at the school both during the school day and after school. 'Fit Kidz' that is starting its involvement in six Boston Public Schools beginning in February will provide the physical fitness aspect that is critical to students' physical and mental health. The three Civic Associations mentioned above will provide tremendous support for school community gatherings, historical forums and fundraising activities. Every effort will be made to have external partner representation on the Clap Community Academy Governing Board.

Part II

A. Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

In most subject areas, the Roger Clap Community Academy will implement the Boston Public Schools curriculum as it is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. However, the school will supplement the curriculum with other instructional materials that support phonics, vocabulary, grammar and syntax, writing process and revision, mathematical problem solving, data collecting and interpretation, number sense, and science concept development.

To meet the academic needs of its diverse student body, the school will use both innovative and proven approaches. In reading, students will be exposed to a wide variety of literary genres and comprehension strategies. In writing, students will learn the essentials about the writing process, the different types of writing, and how to revise a literary piece using the 'Six-Traits of Revision'. In mathematics, students will develop a thorough understanding of numeration and how to use multiple approaches to problem solve and explain the process. In science, the school will use inquiry-based science for application and science texts that support concept development and vocabulary mastery. The school will also implement an art and physical education program to tap into students' artistic creativity and athletic ability. Whenever possible, these courses will be offered after the school day to extend student learning time. As mentioned in the Mission Statement, the ultimate goal of the Roger Clap Innovation School is to develop the whole child.

To ensure that instruction is delivered in optimal conditions, the Clap Community Academy teacher should demonstrate the following:

- Has positive relationship with students
- Deals with students' emotional stability
- Recognizes and provides for individual differences
- Obtains students' involvement in their own learning
- Is creative and innovative
- Knows subject matter in depth
- Engages in professional growth activities
- Is consistent but flexible in dealing with student behavior
- Continually involves parents in student learning activities

Beside the mastery of the basic school curriculum, emphasis will be placed on higher-cognitive learning outcomes that stipulate the development of students' thinking skills. As in most schools, students will come from various socio-economic and linguistic backgrounds and special academic structures must be in place to address both English language acquisition and cognitive impairment issues. All core subject teachers will be trained in remedial reading like Project Read or the Wilson Program, and second language acquisition methodology. That ensures that every student will be taught by a highly qualified teacher.

The Roger Clap Community Academy believes that on-going assessments are crucial in monitoring students' academic progress. A combination of embedded assessments, weekly/monthly and end-of-unit tests will ensure that individual students' academic progress is monitored and academic interventions are provided in a timely fashion. Every effort will be made to ensure that there is an assessment component for everything that is taught. Contracting with a highly esteemed data company like The Achievement-Net in the initial years will establish a culture of a professional data team among staff. In addition to our curricular changes, the design team will look at successful student empowerment programs. One such program sweeping the country's elementary schools is called "The Leader in Me" based on the principles of Steven Covey's best selling book "The 7 Habits of Highly Successful People". Another is the very popular "Advancement via Individual Determination (AVID)" program. This program which started in high schools across the country has caught on in hundreds of middle and elementary schools primarily because it teaches students how to study, read for content, take notes and manage time. It is designed to help students prepare for and succeed in college. In math, the design group will look at the Mathematics Studio Program in which teachers learn and rehearse 'mathematically productive teaching routines'.

B. Schedule and Calendar

The Roger Clap Community Academy will use its autonomy to creatively lengthen the school day and give its students access to more instructional and enrichment time. An additional hour will be added to the regular schedule for students who need tiered interventions or enrichment using creative scheduling. Accelerated academies during school vacations or some Saturday classes will be considered during the period preceding the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment testing window. Teachers will be given flexible hours as the school tries to better utilize teachers' time-on-task to increase instructional hours. The teacher work-year will be extended to include summer professional development time in addition to added PD time during the school year. The school's program schedule will be based on hour-long periods so that teachers can participate in meaningful collaborative lesson planning weekly. Time management is essential if the school is to meet its ambitious goal of academic rigor and comprehensive programming. Unless teachers have adequate time to plan, share and reflect, the quality of curriculum implementation will be compromised greatly.

C. Staffing

The Roger Clap Community Academy will be headed by a principal who will oversee school operations and curriculum implementation. The principal will be assisted by a secretary who will manage the day-to-day operations and a custodian who will be responsible for maintaining the physical plant. The school will accommodate approximately 150 students with one class per grade level, from Kindergarten I to grade 5. Teachers will be expected to fully participate in Professional Learning Communities and join at least one school-based teacher committee.

Besides the classroom teachers, two specialist teachers (probably art and science) and two paraprofessionals will assist teachers during instructional time. The specialists and paraprofessionals will be deployed where additional support is needed. A resource room teacher will also be employed to oversee the inclusion of students with disabilities.

Two instructional coaches will be assigned to the school on a part time basis to initially facilitate the teacher's grade level meetings and work with the Instructional Leadership Team and the Data Team. A teacher-in-charge will be designated and will oversee school operations in the absence of the principal.

Physical education and additional instruction in the Arts will be contracted out to local agencies, and available during and after school hours. The school will request specific autonomy granting their ability to contract with neighboring agencies for these services. We will also seek staffing autonomy with regard the principal's authority to move staff to specific grade levels based on the teacher's certification and skills in order to match the specific needs of the school and students.

In addition, we will request that the principal have the opportunity to 'excess' staff from the school on an annual basis provided notification is given by February 1st. Staff will also be afforded this same authority with timely notification to the principal.

The Roger Clap Community Academy understands that the staff and parent input in the decision-making process is vital to the success of the school. Therefore, an executive board made up of representatives from both constituencies will convene at least every month to discuss curriculum, instruction, assessments, and professional development. Recommendations will be made to the principal and staff.

D. Professional Development

Continuous professional development is at the core of the school's philosophy as it strives to get its staff trained in the latest methodology and instructional approaches. Every year, the teaching staff will go through a total of 50 hours of professional development beyond their contractual workday in reading, writing, mathematics, science, ESL methodology and academic interventions. One to two hour Collaborative Planning sessions will require teachers to engage in Inquiry practices such as reading professional articles, looking at classroom video, and looking at student work including data. As noted earlier, every teacher will acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to implement the many facets of the curriculum and address most literacy and cognitive issues that may present. Up to twenty-fives hours of the professional development will take place before the start of the school year (summer) and the rest throughout the school year.

D. Policies and Procedures

The Roger Clap Community Academy will use its autonomy to establish its own approach to governance and shared-decision. A Governing Board composed of the school principal, teachers, parents, community leaders, business and university partners will provide representation of the different constituencies and a vote on school policies

and procedures. Specifically, there will be 13 members; the principal, four parents, four teachers, and four other members that represent the community. The principal will serve as co-chair; the second co-chair will be a parent elected by the members of the Governing Board. All decisions that affect the educational process, budget allocation, staffing, scheduling, curriculum, programs and delivery of service will be made by the Governing Board. This structure of governance will ensure that the school lives up to its vision of inclusiveness.

Although, the principal will be selected by the superintendent initially, a personnel sub-committee of the Governing Board will be responsible for evaluating his/her performance and continued employment.

The personnel sub-committee will meet four times a year and could be summoned by the co-chairs in case of an emergency. Teachers and other staff members will be interviewed by members of the personnel sub-committee and this group will make hiring recommendations to the Governing Board.

F. Budget

The Roger Clap Community Academy will seek budgetary autonomy similar to that of the BPS' pilot schools in order to maximize services for students. For instance, the school may opt out of certain services, like the district's professional development, textbooks or supply procurements, and instead receive the equivalent per pupil funds that will be added to their budget allocation based on a lump sum 'weighted student formula'. Teachers and specialists will be budgeted on their actual salaries (vs. average salaries). Non-core academic services, like the arts and physical education will be contracted out at a reduced cost or be provided free of charge by our community and university partners.

The savings will be redirected to academic interventions and other essential services that support student achievement and bridge the achievement gap among various ethnic and racial groups.

Part III. Capacity of Applicant Group

In October, 2010, Dr. Johnson presented her "Redesign and Reinvest Plan" to the Boston School Committee that recommended among other things, the closure of the Roger Clap Elementary and nine other schools in Boston. A series of School Committee and school community meetings followed for the next two months outlining the elements of the plan and provided an opportunity for feedback from parents, teachers, students and many other interested constituents. The parents of the Clap school began to immediately mobilize and met regularly to develop a plan to save the school. Because of the huge outpouring of support garnered by the parents and teachers for this school, Dr. Johnson revised her plan to allow for an opportunity to create an Innovation School instead. Her plan was approved by the Boston School Committee in December, 2010.

The applicant group emerged from the larger group of committed individuals that worked so tirelessly to save the school.

The applicant group was originally comprised of parents and the school's current principal (who is also a Clap parent) and a few teachers from the Clap School. This group is united and committed to providing the best possible education to the students of Clap Elementary School. They see the Innovation School option as a mechanism to achieve our goal of creating a top level elementary school that is connected to its neighborhood, community and city.

The parent component is comprised of many individuals with many different talents and areas of expertise that demonstrates a tremendous array of knowledge and skill sets. We have parents who are professors, lawyers, former teachers, project managers etc.

Below are examples of this applicant group's experiences and qualifications. They are current parents at the Clap School:

Kenneth P Jervis is the parent of two Clap students. He is a professional chef and small business operator involved in Food Policy and an advocate for the 'Farm to Table' supply line. Committed to the urban setting for public education and ensuring its equality for all, he will facilitate in the role as Lead Parent and act as liaison between the School Committee, District, parents and students of the Roger Clap Elementary

Ian Gold is the parent of a Clap second grader and prospective K-1 student. He holds a B.A. from the University of Massachusetts Boston, a J.D. degree from New York University School of Law, and is currently an Assistant Federal Public Defender. He attended Boston Public Schools, and is deeply committed to public education. He brings a background in social policy and commitment to social justice to the innovation board.

Maria Cisterna Gold is the parent of a Clap second grader and prospective K-1 student. She holds a Ph.D. from New York University, and is an assistant professor with the Hispanic Studies Department at the University of Massachusetts Boston. As member of the design team, she will serve as a liaison between the school and its institutional partner UMB. She will also oversee parent outreach to our Spanish speaking families of ELL students.

Terri Gorman brings professional managerial experience to the group. She is a board certified and Harvard trained pediatrician who has served for the past five years as the Medical Director for the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center in Brighton. She is also an attending physician at Boston Children's Hospital.

Gene Gorman brings more than 15 years of communications experience to the group. In addition to an earlier career in journalism and marketing, he taught high school before deciding to pursue a career in higher education. He is currently completing his dissertation to fulfill the requirements for a PhD in English and American studies from Boston College. Gene and Terri are parents of a Clap K-1 student.

Karen Murphy is a parent of a Clap first grader and a prospective K-1 student. She holds a BA from the University of NH and has been employed by Au Bon Pain for the last 12 years. She is the Franchise Development Manager for this successful company. Her work as a project manager for Au Bon Pain's Franchise Community, entails managing several projects per year from design to build-out. Karen works with collaborative teams to build the cafes efficiently and cost effectively, within a targeted budget. She tracks all changes that effect both cost and time.

Since the parent group was formed, other individuals from the BPS have now joined the original group who possess the academic skills and experience necessary to create and sustain an excellent innovation school. This group is headed by Assistant Academic Superintendent Elie Jean-Louis, some current BPS principals and teachers. Together the group constitutes the applicant group for the Roger Clap Community Academy.

Please refer to the attached resumes for details on each individual team member's experience and qualifications as well as the statement of commitment.

Part IV. Timetable for Development and Establishment

Once the prospectus is approved, a representative group will meet with members of the BPS' Strategic Office to collect information about writing the Innovation Plan. A Design Team will be developed similar to those created by the Level IV Turnaround Schools last spring. The Design Team will have a diverse representation from all of the constituencies named above.

A Governing Board will be created from members of the Design Team and other interested parties after information and presentations have been made to the larger School Parent Council and community stakeholders.

Regular bi-weekly meetings will commence to begin the work of organizing and writing the school's Innovation Plan. All policies and procedures will be followed. The final version of the Innovation Plan will be completed within the timelines mandated by the BPS and the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary education.

The school principal will be identified by Dr. Carol Johnson as soon as practicable. Teachers will re-apply for their positions in the spring. Vacant positions will be posted and potential candidates interviewed by the personnel sub-committee in concert with the BPS' Department of Human Resources.

Staffing decisions will be announced on or about May 1st.

